

I support petition RM-10811. It accomplishes the generally agreed on goal of allowing virtually full amateur priveleges without Morse Code proficiency, but reserves a small supplemental set of priveleges for the most accomplished operators. The primary purpose of the amateur service is to provide a group of skilled communicators for emergency and extraordinary situations, including probable crises in homeland defense and natural disasters. The other proposals would allow the ranks of amateur radio operators to fill with inadequately trained and half-committed personnel. To hold open an incentive for the most dedicated radio operators to bring their knowledge and skills to the highest level will ensure a capable cadre of operators for emergency needs. It is especially important to include the incentive to learn Morse code at a level (12wpm) that allows real communication, rather than the token and almost useless 5 wpm now required for all license classes. Without this, the knowledge of code will certainly die with the operators licensed under the old rules, and we will lose this invaluable mode of emergency communication with minimal and even makeshift hardware. In a real emergency, the power and equipment to communicate reliably over long distances will not last long.